

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 DOE-15 SOE-02 EB-08 TRSE-00 COME-00
AGRE-00 /126 W
-----099457 041153Z /10

R 041122Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9933
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
DIA WASHDC
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 06633

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PROP, PINT, UR
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV'S SIBERIAN TRIP: AN INTERIM REPORT
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REF: (A) MOSCOW 5653 (NOTAL), (B) MOSCOW 5449 (NOTAL),
(C) MOSCOW 5028 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THUS FAR BREZHNEV'S TRIP HAS INVOLVED MEETINGS
WITH LOCAL PARTY LEADERS IN SEVEN URAL AND SIBERIAN
CITIES ALONG THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RR LINE, WITH MAJOR

MEETINGS (JUDGING FROM THE MEDIA COVERAGE) IN OMSK, NOVOSIBIRSK AND IRKUTSK. IN ADDITION, BREZHNEV IS REPORTED TO HAVE VISITED AN ARMY ROCKET UNIT NEAR NOVOSIBIRSK, A MACHINE-BUILDING PLANT, A METALLURGICAL FACTORY, AND AN AIRCRAFT PLANT. BREZHNEV'S REMARKS, AS GIVEN BY TASS, HAVE STRESSED THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF SIBERIA AND HAVE CALLED, IN FAMILIAR TERMS, FOR GREATER EFFORT TO COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, FULFILL PLANS AND BOOST OUTPUT. THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING YET ON FOREIGN POLICY EXCEPT A BRIEF REMARK ON SOVIET ABILITY TO REPEL AGGRESSION FROM ANY QUARTER. BREZHNEV'S OFFICIAL PARTY CONSISTS ONLY OF DEFENSE MINISTER USTINOV AND "INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION" CHIEF ZAMYATIN. USTINOV'S INCLUSION UNDERSCORES THE MILITARY IMPORTANCE OF THE REGION AND ITS ECONOMIC OUTPUT. ZAMYATIN'S PRESENCE, THUS FAR BARELY MENTIONED IN THE TASS REPORTS, SUGGESTS THAT A MAJOR BREZHNEV SPEECH ON FOREIGN POLICY -- PRESUMABLY STRESSING THE USSR'S ROLE AS AN ASIAN POWER--MAY BE IN THE OFFING.

1. FIRST WORD OF BREZHNEV'S TRIP EAST, THUS FAR BY SPECIAL TRAIN ALONG THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RR, CAME IN A BRIEF, MARCH 28 TASS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE GENERAL SECRETARY ACCOMPANIED BY USTINOV AND ZAMYATIN, DEPARTED MOSCOW ON A TRIP "DURING WHICH HE WOULD VISIT A NUMBER OF CITIES OF SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST." TASS SAID NOTHING CONFIDENTIAL

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ABOUT THE TRIP'S PURPOSE.

2. AS OF APRIL 2, BREZHNEV AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAD GOTTEN AT LEAST AS FAR AS LAKE BAYKAL IN CENTRAL SIBERIA, HAVING STOPPED ALONG THE WAY IN KIROV, PERM, TYUMEN', OMSK, NOVOSIBIRSK, KRASNOYARSK AND IRKUTSK. HIS TRAIN IS STILL HEADED EAST, AND PRESUMABLY WILL GO AS FAR AS KHABAROVSK, ON THE NORTHEASTERN TIP OF THE SOVIET-CHINESE BORDER.

3. JUDGING FROM DAILY TASS ACCOUNTS OF THE TRIP, IT THUS FAR HAS SERVED TO UNDERSCORE THE ECONOMIC AS WELL AS THE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REGION. IN HIS MEETINGS WITH LOCAL PARTY OFFICIALS BREZHNEV HAS DISCUSSED ENERGY, CONSTRUCTION, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY, POINTING OUT LOCAL PROBLEMS AND URGING, IN FAMILIAR TERMS, TIMELY COMPLETION OF MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, BETTER USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES, AND UNFAILING PLAN FULFILLMENT. SOCIALIST COMPETITION HAS ALSO BEEN PLUGGED. AND, AS IF TO REMIND HIS INTERLOCUTORS THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP IS STILL ALIVE, BREZHNEV HAS ROUTINELY CONVEYED GREETINGS FROM THE POLITBURO MEMBERS.

4. THE MILITARY ASPECT OF THE TRIP HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED TO DATE BY A VISIT TO AN ARMY ROCKET UNIT NEAR NOVOSIBIRSK AND A TOUR OF AN IRKUTSK AVIATION PLANT. IN ADDITION, BREZHNEV AND USTIN V TOURED A MACHINE-BUILDING PLANT AND A METALLURGICAL FACTORY.

5. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE TRIP WAS MODEST, WITH BRIEF TASS ITEMS OF BREZHNEV'S DEPARTURE FROM MOSCOW AND WHAT APPARENTLY WERE WHISTLE STOPS IN KIROV AND PERM. MUCH LARGER TASS PIECES RESULTED FROM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 06633

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BREZHNEV'S MEETINGS IN OMSK, NOVOSIBIRSK, KRASNOYARSK,
AND IRKUTSK, AND THE CENTRAL PRESS CARRIED PHOTOGRAPHS
OF ONE EVENT IN EACH OF THE LATTER THREE CITIES.
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SIMILARLY, SOVIET TV HAS RUN BRIEF FILM, (AS WELL AS STILL
PHOTOS NOT APPEARING IN THE PRESS,) OF SOME OF BREZHNEV'S
DOINGS IN NOVOSIBIRSK, KRASNOYARSK, AND IRKUTSK.

6. THE TASS STORIES, STILL PHOTOS AND THE TV FILM
INDICATE THAT:

--BREZHNEV SEEMS IN GOOD FORM, ALTHOUGH HIS VOICE
HAS NOT BEEN CARRIED ON RADIO OR TV;

--BREZHNEV'S SPECIAL TRAIN CONSISTS OF AT LEAST FIVE
LARGE CARS;

--USTINOV HAS RECEIVED LITTLE MEDIA ATTENTION, ALTHOUGH
HE IS LISTED AS ATTENDING MAJOR MEETINGS AND IS SHOWN
IN PHOTOS AND FILM;

--ZAMYATIN HAS RECEIVED VIRTUALLY NO MEDIA ATTENTION;

--BREZHNEV THUS FAR HAS NOT ADDRESSED HIMSELF
TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS, EXCEPT FOR BRIEF REMARKS AT THE ROCKET
UNIT ABOUT THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF SOVIET ARMED FORCES
AND THEIR ABILITY TO REPEL AGGRESSION FROM ANY QUARTER.

7. USTINOV WAS INCLUDED IN BREZHNEV'S SMALL OFFICIAL
PARTY APPARENTLY TO UNDERSCORE HIS MILITARY IMPORTANCE PERSONAL
"PRESS SECRETARY" (I.E., EDITING BREZHNEV'S REMARKS
AND SELECTING PHOTOS FOR PUBLICATION BY TASS). ZAMYATIN'S
PRESENCE ALSO MAY INDICATE THAT BREZHNEV PLANS TO DELIVER
A FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH, PRESUMABLY HIGHLIGHTING THE
USSR'S STATUS AS AN "ASIAN POWER." TOON

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